

6

A
SERMON
Preach'd to the
SOCIETIES

FOR
Reformation of MANNERS,

IN THE
Cities of *London and Westminster:*

AT
SALTERS-HALL,
Octob. 6. 1701.

Publish'd at their Request.

By SAMUEL POMFRET.

LONDON,
Printed for *John Lawrence* at the
Angel in the Poultry. 1701.

MEMORIAL

Presented to the

HOUSE OF COMMONS

IN

1841

BY

JOHN R. HALL

OF

THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

1841

Printed by J. W. Smith

Printed by J. W. Smith

LONDON

Printed by J. W. Smith

1841

TO THE
Worthy Members
OF THE
SOCIETIES
FOR THE
Reformation of MANNERS.

Honoured Sirs,

UPon your Call to this double Service
of Preaching and Printing; had I
consulted only Flesh and Blood, the
Sense of my great unfitness, had made
me Excuse, not to say Refuse it: But consult-
ing with a better Oracle, I was brought to yield;
as being jealous least in neglecting your's, I should
neglect the Call of God.

A 2

Your

The Preface.

Your kind owning so mean a Discourse, denoteth great humility in you; not any Excellency in it: The Design proposed by it, is (as the Author would approve himself to be) Honest and Good, to promote that glorious Work of Reformation so happily begun by you. The Subject chosen for it, is proper and Seasonable, viz. To be of Good Courage in the doing of it. The advice given you in it, is religious and reasonable, as bearing the Imprimatur of Scripture: The Style and Dress of it, is poor and plain, as suiting best with my Talent and Temper: And its desired Success depends upon the Divine Blessing; which may comfortably be hoped for, in the faithful discharge of your Duty.

Gentlemen,

As you bear the Inscription and Character of Societies for Reformation of Manners, I look upon you as Trustees for the Honour of God, and the Publick Good; such as have the Eyes of men both Good and Bad, and the Vows of God both Personal and Social upon you. How great an Essential then, is Good Courage to the right discharge of so Great a Trust? The Jews have a Saying, That a man should set his Face as a Flint, and his Countenance as a Leopard, stout and stern, in doing the Will of God: The same may I say concerning you, with better reason, both as you are the Devoted Servants of the Living God, and the sworn Soldiers of a dying

The Preface.

ing Jesus : O what a Mighty Spirit of Resolution should be found in you, to advance this Work of Reformation undertaken by you ? Methinks your Spirits should be raised to the highest pitch of Zeal and Activity; like that Brave Fabritius, of whom it was said, "That one might
" as well offer to stop the Sun in its Course,
" as him in the Course of Justice". So should you be in Executing Justice against those Crying Sins, and Daring Sinners, that make a Mock of Sin, and bid Defiance to the God that made them : You should be herein as unmoveable as Rocks, and as inflexible as Oaks.

What our Blessed Lord and Saviour saith of the Kingdom of Heaven, Matth. 11. 12. That from the days of John the Baptist, it suffereth Violence, even untill now, and the violent take it by force ; may fitly be said of Re-forming Work, with little alteration, Sc. That from the days of its first Commencement, it hath suffered Violence even untill now, and unto the time of its last Accomplishment, the Valiant, the Violent Reformer must take it by Force. An honourable and gloriqus Prize indeed it is ; but must be atchieved by an Heroical and generous Enterprize.

Many and great have been the Obstinate and Malicious attempts of the Devil and his Agents, against both your Persons and Work ; but God hath given them a miscarrying Womb. What

The Preface.

Christ once said to Peter, Luk. 22. 31, 32. Behold Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as Wheat: but I have prayed for thee, that thy Faith fail not: May also be applyed to you; Satan hates you, and therefore Desires to have you; that he might draw you to Sin, and so set God against you; and that he might draw off your Love, and so divide you among your selves, and set you one against another: But the Lord hath rebuked him, and been a Refuge to you. How parallel is that of the Psalmist to your Case? Psal. 118. 13. The Enemy hath thrust sore at me, that I might fall; but the Lord hath helped me. Through what potent Difficulties, and in what Colds and Heats your Hands have cleaved to the Plough, is not unknown to your Friends: But this may serve as a never-failing Encouragement, that God Omnipotent hath still appeared for you, and carryed you on; and I beseech you to mark the Apostles Inference, in that 2 Cor. 1. 10. Who hath delivered, and doth deliver, in whom we trust that he will yet deliver. As the Gates of Hell, i. e. all the United Powers and Policies of Men and Devils, could not strangle Reformation Work in its Cradle at first, nor Crush and kill it in its hopefull Growth hitherto; so may you on good Ground trust for the the future they never shall: Only, Be strong, and of Good Courage, and then, methinks, Heaven seems big with Blessings ready to be showr'd down upon us; and Providence

The Preface.

vidence speaks a near approach of God in Mercy to us. All Blessings center in Immanuel, i. e. God with us. Some of us can Remember what a Dark Cloud impended over this sinful Land; and what melancholly thoughts possessed some of our State and Church Physicians, viz. That God was departing, and removing his Candlestick, and England drawing her last breath, and emitting her dying Groans, that her Wound was incurable; because she declar'd her Sin as Sodom, and the Ephah of her wickedness was full, and the Talent of Lead was laid upon the mouth thereof, Zech. 5. 6, 7, 8. But (Blessed be God) whose Wayes and Thoughts are not like ours: He Remembered Mercy in the midst of Judgment, and hath scattered that dark Cloud, and saved us with a Notwithstanding to our Rebelling against him, as Israel at the Red Sea: And hath made you (Gentlemen) to be a willing People in the day of his Power; to Engage in a Work wherein he hath Engaged to be with you, and wherein it is your Glory as well as your Duty to be Constant and Courageous.

To conclude, Let nothing take you off your Work, till he who hath called you to it, shall call you off by Death from it. Arm yourselves with this Resolution, in the Strength of Christ, to endure Hardness, to despise Obloquies, to glory in Reproaches for Christ, to be ambitious for nothing so much as to Please your God,

The Preface.

God, and secure his Favour in the doing your Duty; steadfastly believing nothing can undo you but Disobedience to God: And when you have done all, see your Need of the Blood of Sprinkling, and God's Pardoning Mercy. That you may do worthily in our Ephratah, and be Famous in our Bethlehem, and Crown our Hopes in Compleating the Work; and your selves being Faithful unto Death, may receive a Crown of Life, shall be the Constant Prayer of

Your Willing, and

Faithfull Servant,

Samuel Pomfret.

1

A
SERMON
Preached to the
SOCIETIES
FOR
Reformation of MANNERS.

EZRA X. iv.

*Arise, for this matter belongeth unto thee;
we also will be with thee: be of good
Courage, and do it.*

TO let you in to see the Suitableness of
my Text, to the Occasion of this our
present Meeting; it will be needful
to give you a brief Account of those Times,
and the Occurrences thereof, which were the

B

Occa-

Occasion of these words. Take it as followeth.

Jer. 29. 10. The Lord had given out a gracious Promise to the people of the *Jews*, (a People called by his Name) that when Seventy years were accomplished at *Babylon*, he would visit them, and perform his Good word towards them, in causing them to return to *Jerusalem*. Accordingly (for God is exact to his time) when Seventy years were expired, after a sore and tedious Oppression, both in their Religion, and Civil Liberties; the Lord stirreth up the Spirit of *Cyrus*, in the first year of his Reign, to grant free Liberty to all the People of the *Jews*, to go up to *Jerusalem*, to reedifie the Temple, and to restore the Worship of God. Whereupon the Tribes of *Judah*, and *Benjamin*, they set out and go up to *Jerusalem*: This is the summ of the first and second Chapters of this Book. The third Chapter gives an account of their laying the foundation of the Temple, whereat the Old men mourn'd, and the Young rejoyc'd. The fourth Chapt. gives an account, what Opposition they met with in their building, and thereby how the work ceased 'till the second year of *Darius*. The fifth Chapter gives an account, how the Lord stirr'd up the Prophets, *Haggai* and *Zachariah* to prophesie to the *Jews*, to return to the work of Building again, with Promises of his Presence and Assistance. The sixth Chapter gives an account of *Darius* his favourable Decree, for Encouragement of the work,
and

Reformation of Manners.

3

and how the *Jews* prospered therein: But all this while, they were unreformed in their Manners. Wherefore in the seventh Chapter the Lord stirreth up the spirit of *Ezra*, a ready Scribe in the Law of *Moses*, to go to *Jerusalem*, and set upon the work of Reformation; and in order to it he prepareth his Heart to seek the Law of the Lord, and to do it, and to teach in *Israel* Statutes, and Judgments, *vers.* 10. and having obtained the Royal Assent of the King to the work, *vers.* 23. he Blesseth the Lord his God, that had put such a thing as this in the Kings heart, *ver.* 27. In the eighth Chapt. he keeps a Fast at *Abava*, and from thence he comes to *Jerusalem*; and understanding how Sin like a Plague-sore, had overspread *Judah*, and *Jerusalem*, their Princes, Priests; and People, all corrupted; the Good Man (out of the truth and strength of Zeal for God, his deep hatred of Sin, and his dear and tender regard to the Souls of the People) he becomes a Spectacle, and Mirrour of Grief and Sorrow; and as one amazed, and overwhelm'd, he falls down before the Lord in the Court of the Temple, lamenting and confessing the aggravated trespasses of the People. The ninth Chapter from the 3d. *vers.* runneth out in brokenness, tears, strong cries and groans, insomuch as the City is Alarm'd; and you read in 10th. Chap. first *ver.* A very great Congregation of Men, Women, and Children, assembled unto him, and wept with him. Note hence, how powerful Influence, one lively, zealous Servant of

God, hath upon a Multitude. In this sad, and sorrowful posture of affairs ; the Lord inspirith *Shecaniah* (a man of Good Courage, and Conscience) to animate, and encourage our weeping *Ezra*, that lay prostrate in Great heaviness for the Sins of *Israel*. Vers. 2d. he saith *We have trespassed against our God, &c. yet now there is hope in Israel concerning this thing.* And Vers. 3d. *Let us make a Covenant with our God, that we will put away our sins, and Reform our Manners.* Wherefore, *Arise Ezra*, (as in the Text) q. d. This Great and Good Work of Reformation cannot be done while thou liest on the ground. Thus you see the Suitableness of the words of my Text, to the work of this day : and I think (I may say) that if there be any History in the whole Book of God, that may parallel our times, sure it is this ; for you will find, as Face answereth unto Face, so *Israel* of old to *England* now.

(1.) Were they a People called by God's Name? So are we.

(2.) Had they for their Sins been in Bondage? So have we. They under *Literal*, and we under *Myistical Babylon*. Have you forgot it?

(3.) Did the Lord pity them, and raise up Instruments to deliver and save them? So he hath us ; they by the hand of a Heathen, we by the hand of a Christian Prince.

(4.) Did *Israel* reform after they were delivered? See *Ezr.* 9. 1. Saved out of *Babylon*, yet doing after the Abominations of the Heathens, when in *Jerusalem*. Are we reformed that

that have been a People saved by the Lord? How comes then an Appointment for the work of this day? what do we here?

(5.) What will an offended God do with an unreformed *Israel*? will he return them back into Bondage in *Babylon* again? Surely he might have justified himself to the whole World, if he had done so: but behold, and wonder at the riches of his Goodness, with a *Non-obstante* to all their Provocations, and unworthiness; he is pleased to raise up, and employ many blessed and Glorious Instruments, for the Re-forming them, in order to the making them a flourishing, and happy People. The first was *Zerubbabel*, the second was *Ezra*, the third was *Nehemiah*: And hath not our gracious God raised up, and Employed many blessed Instruments (out of the thousands of this City) whose Spirits the Lord hath stirred up, to offer themselves willingly, to advance this blessed Work of Re-forming us, in order to the settling us an happy and flourishing People. So that you see the Text is Parallel to our times; and I heartily wish, That the Trumpet blown, on this Occasion here, or elsewhere, may never leave you at a loss, by giving an Uncertain sound.

For the Division of the Words, you may observe in them these four general parts.

(1.) A proper Excitation: *Arise.*

(2.) A personal Application: *This matter belongeth unto thee.*

(3.) A publick Resolution: *We also will be with thee.*

(4.) A practical Exhortation: *Be of good Courage, and do it.*

Briefly to give you the Summ, and sense of the Words:

Arise;] A very proper Phrase for the exciting this Good Man, that lay, not *Jonah*-like, in a deep Sleep in the sides of the Ship; no, but *Joshua*-like in a deep sorrow for the sins of the People: and it is of the same Import, as that Call of God to him, *Josh. 7. 10. Get up, wherefore liest thou on the ground? Israel hath sinned; up to the Reforming and amending them, and so to the averting my Wrath. Arise Ezra, here is a Great Work to be done, it's not now a time to lie down discouraged; up, there is hope in Israel concerning this thing.*

This matter belongeth unto thee.] q. d. Thou art qualified both with excellent Skill and Knowledge in the Law of God, and thou art a Religious, a Reformed man thy self, refin'd and drain'd from the Pollutions of *Israel*, and thou art rais'd up of God, and hast prepared thy Heart to the Work in seeking the Lord, and thou art come to the City with authority both from God, and the King of *Persia*; this is thy Errand and design to Reform all Disorders and Corruption among the People; and therefore up, for this matter belongeth unto thee in special.

We also will be with thee.] This is added both by way of Encouragement, and Engagement; q. d. It's true, the work of Reforming so corrupt a Body, is a great and arduous work, at-
tended

tended with so many, and such mighty difficulties, as would become insuperable, and surmount the abilities, and sink the spirit of any single Man alone; but behold, here a very great Congregation, and Blessed be God, who hath touched the Hearts of many, both high and low, to come here, and joyn with thee in this work: This carries a Mighty Energy, and Encouragement in it, we also will be with thee to aid and assist.

Be of good Courage, and do it.] i. e. Wax strong and valiant, summon up all the Powers of thy Soul, shew thy self a man of Mettle for God, a well-resolv'd Man against all difficulties; up and be doing, there must not only be an ardent affection to, but an active Hand in it: Affection without action is like *Rachel*, beautiful but barren.

The words thus divided, and opened, afford us these Four doctrinal Propositions, as fully suited to, and freely flowing from them without straining: And that's the best Honey that runs from the Comb without pressing.

1. *That good men may stand in need of a Word of Excitation to the work of Reformation.*

2. *That it greatly tends to excite, and quicken Good men to Reforming Work, to Know assuredly that this Matter belongeth unto them.*

3. *That all good Men should shew themselves ready to encourage those who are engaged in Reforming Work, by concurring and joyning with them.*

4. *That all those who are engaged in this Good Work, should be Men of Good Courage, in the doing of it. Or That Good Courage is a necessary Qualification, to the Work of Reformation.*

Thus (my Beloved) you see in these Excellent Truths, both how congruous, and copious my Text is to the Service of this day. But inasmuch, as it cannot be expected, that within the narrow limits of a single Sermon, I should be able to manage them all ; I shall therefore do, as you use to do, when you go to a Shop richly furnished with choice Wares, you do not take all, but such as is most fit for your use : And that Truth I shall single out, which I conceive best suits our present Work, is the fourth and last Proposition.

That all those who are Engaged in this Good Work of Reformation, should be Men of Good Courage in the doing of it.

In the Prosecution of this Truth, the Rules of Method will oblige me to three things :

1. To explain so much of it as is needfull.
2. To offer something by way of Proof, and to give you the Reasons of it.
3. To make some practical Improvement of the whole.

1. To Explain so much as may be needfull, and that I take to be the Qualification of Reformers, here express'd, viz. *Good Courage*. A right Understanding of which is of great moment

moment in the point before us ; for as all is not Gold that glisters, so all is not good Courage that blusters : Its not a stern Countenance, nor a *Stentorian* Voice, that shews it ; no, nor that which is a meer natural Courage, so much cried up, and renowned among men : For that only depends on the height and Greatness of the natural Spirits and Blood, seated in the heart ; Hence some think, the Word Courage is derived from *Cordis Actio*, but this is common to men both good and bad, and is also found among Bruits, as Lyons and Dogs : And where it is found in man, if unsanctified, it's but like that Wisdom St. *James* speaks of, *Chap. 3. 15.* That is *Not from above*, its *Earthly, Sensuat, and Devilish* ; and if a Temptation take it, it boyls up and breaks out into bloody rage, and revenge. But by Courage here is meant a Theological, and Divine Courage ; and therefore you have the Attribute *Good* joyn'd with it. I shall shew it you in its Nature, Opposites and Concommitants, and its Properties :- In its Nature, it is no other than a principle of holy ardour and zeal planted in the heart of a good man, moving him to undertake the most difficult Services for the Honour of God, and the publick Good. So that you see hereunto is required, That the man be a *good man*, e're ever he can be of good Courage : Our Blessed Saviour is very Express in this Case, *Matth. 7. 18.* The Tree must be good, e're the Fruit be good. If you ask me what I mean by good man ? The Answer is easie and ready, *viz. A man Sanctified,*

fied, and Renewed by Grace ; one in whose Soul there is laid the Ground Work of Regeneration : So that this good Courage beareth date only from the Time of the Second birth. The Root and Rise of it, is the Grace of God wrought in the Heart ; the Rule and Guide of it, is the Will of God Revealed in his Word ; the Aim and End of it is the Honour and Glory of God in all its Actings : So that from these Premises, you may Conclude, that there is no good Courage found dwelling in the Heart of a natural unregenerate Man ; for the *Carnal mind is Enmity against God*, and Goodness : There is a Quarrel in our very Natures against God, and his Holy Law, which nothing can Heal but renewing Grace. The best of a natural mans Courage, is but like *Jehu*, Hypocritical in all its Operations, and Ends ; *2 Kings 10. 16. Come see my Zeal for the Lord*, it was but to be seen of men, he Borrows indeed the Name of God for a Cover and Pretence ; but intended his own Applause, and Preferment, and further than this *He took no Heed to walk in the Law of the Lord with all his Heart* : For he *Departed not from the Sins of Jeroboam, which made Israel to Sin*, ver. 31. And so was himself a cast away after all, for all he did was bottom'd in self as the Principle, and bounded and Terminated in self as the End ; self was both the Spring and Center ; as in its rise, so in all its returns, and Dedications, the Natural mans Courage, Sacrifices all to Self, puts the Garland and Bayes, on his own Head, God hath little

little or no Share in it: But now this Good, and true Courage, in my Text, and Doctrine, Proceeds from a Gracious Heart, inflamed with Love to, and Zeal for the Honour of God, in all its undertakings; this will receive some further accession of light, if we consider it in its Opposites and Concommitants. As,

1. Its opposite to and exclusive of a base Cowardise, and Slavish fear of man, and it includes and takes in a filial gracious fear of God: *Luke 12. 4, 5. Be not afraid of them that can only Kill the Body; But I will forwarn you whom you shall fear: fear him which hath power to cast into Hell.* The one as an Antidote expells the other, *Exod. 18. 21.*

2. It excludes a Blind Rash, Fool-Hardiness and Presumption, and it takes in a Wise, Provident, and Prudent Foresight, a well Advised Judgment. Discretion and Courage are conjunct; Courage resolves the Duty, and Discretion considers how it must be done; Courage draws the Bow, and Discretion directs the Arrow; Good Courage hath light, as well as heat; it is wary, as well as warm: *Psal. 112. 5.*

3. It Excludes a Bitter, Bloody, Cholerick, Wrathful Spirit, that works not the Righteousness of God, but is set on fire of Hell, and Foams like the Raging Sea, and Breaks out into Death and Destruction, as *Simeon and Levi*: This Distemper'd Heat, and Madness of an Evil Nature, Good Courage excludes; and takes in a just and Pious Indignation against Sin, in conjunction with a Tender Pity and Compassion

sion to Sinners; it aims not at mischief to hurt the Sinner, but at his Conviction and Reformation: It is like that Wisdom that comes from above, there is an Holy Sweetness and meekness accompanying it, as in 2 *Tim.* 2. 25. It makes a man burn with an ardent desire to win their Souls, rather than hurt their Bodies; yet it excludes that Foolish pity, that tends to Cherish the Sin, and ruine the Soul. 1 *King.* 15. 13. Let us further consider this Good Courage in its Properties; as,

1. It is *Spiritual*, and Divine, it chiefly carries out the Heart towards God, it appeareth on his Call, it goeth forth in his Name, and strength: Gods Command; *Thou shalt*, or *Thou shalt not*, commands it, esteeming God as all, and the Creature as lighter than vanity; it makes a man prefer the Honour of God above his own private interest, can better endure to have his own Name and Credit to be Trampled on, and Trod down, than the Name of God Blasphemed, *Psal.* 74. 10. *O Lord, how long shall the Enemy Blaspheme thy Name?*

2. It is impartial, it sets the Heart against *all Sin*, it is not hot against One, and cold towards another; *Psal.* 119. 128. *I hate every false way.* If men be wicked, be they who they will, high or low, rich or poor, nearly related or more remote; it dares not, will not spare any, that dares to declare their Sin as *Sodom*, it will appear against Sinners clothed in Silk, as well as Rags.

3. It

Reformation of Manners:

13

3. It is Expensive, spares no Cost ; Good Courage is never Covetous of pains, or purse : You shall not hear it say, Well, now I hope I have done enough ; no, but as the *Liberal man deviseth Liberal things* ; so it is ever projecting, and Travelling with Unwearied designs, how to advance the Honour of God, promote his interest, and Vindicate his Name yet further in the World. 1 *Chron*, 29. 2, 3. *Now I have prepared with all my Might for the House of my God, Gold and Silver, &c. Moreover (saith he) because I have set my Affection to the House of my God, I have of mine own proper goods, given over and above all that I have prepared, &c.*

4. It is undaunted, and Resolute, where the Honour of God, and the Publick Good is concern'd : It is deaf to all inticements and intreaties, that would draw off the heart, or take off the hand from the Work of God. With what an Holy Gallantry of Spirit did that * *Italian* Marquess, breaks through the Embraces of a Wife, the Cries of Children, and the intreaties of Friends, to maintain the Cause, and Obey the call of God. Good Courage appeareth most in the times of difficulties, and greatest Oppositions ; it puts out in a Storm *Elijah*-like, *As the Lord liveth (saith he in that evil time) I will shew my self to Ahab,* 1 *Kings* 18. 15. It makes a man like a brazen Wall, beats back all assaults ; it's like Ballast in the Ship, that keeps it steady in a storm ; it will run hazards for God, venture Reputation,

* *Galleacius Cariciolus*

on, Estate, and all: It is not Scorns, and Scoffs that can dismay it: Whereas a man that wants this Good Cource, like a Wave of the Sea, is tofs'd this way one while, and then another; like a Reed always bends with the stream, is soon frightened, and dastard with the least appearance of danger; the frown of a mortal man, the fancy of a Lyon in the way, or the fear of a shadow, quenches and cools all: But this Good Courage is enkindled and animated so much the more, by oppositions; for the *Reghiteous are as bold as a Lyon.*

5. It is Unfeigned and sincere; it depends not upon the eye, or esteem of man; but as *David*, a man after Gods own Heart, who in a time of sharp and sore Tryal, *Encouraged himself in the Lord his God*, 1 Sam. 30. 6. It makes a man Eye God in all, and to reckon and rest upon God as a sufficient help, against a Legion of Devils: It makes a man to be true to his God, satisfied in doing his Duty, and so leaves the success to him, is heartily glad when he finds a willingness and readiness to offer himself to the service and work of his Day and Place: Although others shrink and withdraw. See how it wrought in *Caleb* and *Joshua*, when the Ten Faint-hearted Spies discouraged the people, O we are never able to encounter these *Anakims* say the Ten; We are able say the Two; They are stronger and mightier than we say the Ten; They are Bread for us say the Two; We are but as Grasshoppers in their Sight say the Ten; the Lord is with us say the Two; *Numb. 13.* from the

the 28. to the ehd. Thus *Caleb* and *Joshua* approved themselves men of Good Courage in their fidelity to God, when the false and therefore faint-hearted multitude rebelled and murmured against him. And it is the constant Language of this Good Courage, Though I should lose my esteem with men, and not serve my self; yet if I can but serve and please my God, it is enough; if the Ballance must go down on one side, O let it be on mine and not Gods.

6. It is constant and durable, it never sounds a retreat to go back, but endures to the end. See how it manifested it self in this respect, in *Nehemiah* when the Enemies dealt subtilly and plotted against him, *Nehemiah* 6. 11. *Should such a man as I flee?* and in § Chap. and 16. *Yea also I continued in the Work*; He stood his ground, resolved rather to dye on the Spot, than shamefully to recede from his profession: Of the same temper and Spirit was blessed *Luther*, "Think of me (saith he) any thing rather than running away from the Cause of Christ. And (my beloved) the reason is evident, because a man of true Courage, is not mov'd as an Hypocrite by outward poysses, or as a Clock by Weights; no, but from a vital principle, and he goeth not out in any confidence on his own strength, but as *David* against *Goliath*, in the Name and strength of God: And therefore his heart is fixed trusting in God; whatever impediments lie in the way, he is not afraid, but on he goeth, having a good God, and a good Conscience, he fears no Colours.

And

And thus I have accounted, for the first General head proposed, *viz.* Explaining what might be needfull to be cleared.

The Second General head, *viz.* to Offer somewhat by way of Proof, and to lay down the Reasons.

1. By way of Proof, and that both from Scripture Precepts binding to it; and Scripture Presidents practising of it. If you look unto the 1st Chap. of the Book of Joshua, you will find no less than Four times this Command to be of Good Courage repeated, Verse 6. *Be strong and of a Good Courage.* Verse 7. *Only be thou strong, and very Couragious.* Verse 9. *Have I not Com-manded thee? Be strong and of a Good Courage.* Verse. 18. *Only be strong and of a Good Courage.* I hope none are so vain, as to think these are vain repetitions: Gods Will revealed in his word, is the highest Rule and Reason of our Duty. Again Hag. 2. 4. *Yet now be strong O Zerubbabel, saith the Lord; and be strong O Joshua, and be strong all ye People of the Land, saith the Lord, and Work, for I am with you saith the Lord.* Psal. 31. 24. *Be of Good Courage, and he shall strengthen your Heart, all ye that hope in the Lord.* So the 3 Zeph. 16. Christians read your Bibles, you will find, this is Universally binding; and whoever in the Work of God, nourisheth a Timerous fearful Spirit, is (as I may say) directly Antipodes to the Word of God.

And for Scripture Presidents abounding and
abiding

abiding in the Practice hereof; time would fail me to enumerate all the Worthies of God before, and since Christs time. *Moses, Phinehas, Caleb, Joshua, Deborah, Gideon, Sampson, Samuel, David, Hezekiah, Jehosaphat, Zerubbabel, Nehemiah, Ezra, Esther.* Give me leave, to mention somewhat only of three or four of them: *Moses*, how full of this Good Courage was he! When he had been in the Mount with God, and the People in his absence had committed Idolatry, *Exod. 32. 19.* As soon as he drew nigh the Camp, and saw the Calf and the dancing; *Moses anger waxed hot, and he cast the Tables out of his hand, and brake them beneath the Mount. V. 20.* And he took the Calf which they had made, and he burnt it in the Fire, and ground it to powder, and straved it upon the water, and made the Children of Israel drink of it: In *Vers. 26.* he stood in the Gate of the Camp, and said, *Who is on the Lords side?* and then fell upon the executing of Justice on the Offenders; and after that acted the part of an Advocate. First he was up and active in punishing the Delinquents, and then he falls down, and makes Intercession, *v. 31.* *Oh, this People have sinned a great sin; yet now if thou wilt, forgive their sin; if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of the Book which thou hast written.* Another instance shall be of *Nehemiah*, that worthy Pattern to all Reformers: What Courage did he manifest in his Self-denial, when he first heard of the sad State of things at *Jerusalem*? *Chap. 1. 4.* though as to his own private Circumstances, he was at ease and prosperous

rous at the Court: Yet when he hears of the ill state of the Publick, he mourns and prays, and leaves all the preferment of the Court, comes to *Jerusalem*, exposeth himself to manifold hazards, encounters with many and great Oppositions; and particularly how remarkable is that in *Chap. 2. 19, 20.* when *Sanballat* and *Tobiah* laughed at, and despised the *Jews*, seeking to blast this Good Mans Endeavours in the Work of God, he with an invincible Courage, said, *The God of Heaven he will prosper us, therefore we his servants will arise and work; Behold his Noble Courage, we will arise, and build; Behold the solid ground of it, The God of Heaven will prosper us: and if you look into the 4. chap. v. 14.* he inciteth and assisteth others upon the same ground of encouragement; *Be not afraid of them, Remember the Lord who is Great.* Another Instance shall be that of *David*, *Psal. 101. 8.* *I will early destroy all the wicked of the Land, that I may cut off all wicked doers from the City of the Lord.* Observe, when he had the execution of Justice in his hand, to discharge, he would be *early* at it, and indefatigable in it. Once more, look but into the Book of *Esther*, *Chap. 4. 16.* Many were the dangers and difficulties that lay in her way; she was to affront *Haman*, the Great Favourite of the King, the Minion of the Court; she was to venture in uncalled; she was to attempt the reversing of a Law of the *Medes* and *Persians*, which was not to be chang'd: and yet behold her admirable Boldness and Courage, neither
any,

any, nor all these things, can affright or de-
te r her ; it was for God and the publick Good,
onr and in, She will go, saying, *If I perish, I pe-
rish*: O Noble, and brave Courage, she pre-
ferrs the Honour of God, and the safety of his
Church before her Life. I might also descend
down into the New Testament, and mention
John Baptist, with what Courage he reproved
a generation of Vipers, and also *Herod* for
his *Herodias*: and after him the Apostles, *Acts*
4. 13. With what undaunted boldness they
appeared, insomuch as their very Enemies
marvelled at them; but enough hath been of-
fered by way of Proof; and to add any more,
the Truth needs it not, and Time permits it
not.

2. I shall therefore now in the second place
give you the Reasons of it, and they shall be
drawn from these three following Topicks,
which deserve our Observation.

1. From the Nature of the *Work* it self.

2. From the Nature of the *Instruments* em-
ployed in it.

3. From the Nature of the *Objects* of it.

1 *Rea.* From the Nature of the Work it self,
viz. Reformation-work; which is a work of that
nature, that (view it which way you please)
can never be carried on without Courage. Con-
sider it as it is *publick Work*, (for so
it is;) a man had as good never
meddle with it at all, unless he be
a Resolv'd man to go through with it: Alas
without Courage, as soon as he meets with

*It's pub-
lick.*

Pull-backs, (as there are many of them) he will presently grow weary, and be for shifting it off again. If therefore (as the Royal Preacher saith) *Eccl. 9. 10. Whatever thy hand finds to do, be it to Meditate, or pray in private, thou art to do it with all thy Might*; how much more doth it necessarily follow in Publick work, that it be attended with Resolution and Courage? It being a Work of Such Great Importance, (nay, what if I should say, of the Greatest importance, that ever was undertook for God, in this lower World, save Preaching the Gospel,) it is worthy of all our Strength and Spirit; we can never lay it out better, nay, nor near so well: Such as have the highest Courage, any man Living can expresse, can't be supposed to have an Excess in such a work.

2. Again, Survey the Difficulty of this Work: though Reforming work brings the greatest Benefits and Blessings to a Land; yet (yea so much the more) it will exasperate Hell, and a malignant wicked World: and surely then, it's not a Work for the faint and fearful to carry on. Hence the Apostle brings in this as the Reason, why Christians should *be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might*; for, saith he, *we wrestle not against Flesh and Blood, but against Principalities, against Powers, &c. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the Devil, Eph. 6. 10, 11, 12, 13.* Reforming work is like storming the very Gates of Hell, undermining

Satan's Kingdom in this World ; and can you think to find the Devil sleeping or idle ? O no he is said to *go about like a roaring Lyon, seeking whom he may devour*, 1 Pet. 5. 8. he will raise all the force of Hell against this Work ; The Powers of Darkness will be up in Arms, and their Name is *Legion*, for they are many, and their Nature is *Spiritual Wickedness*: A man without Courage is as a Bee without a Sting, a Souldier without a Weapon, a Ship without an Anchor, yea as a Body without a Soul. So that (look which way you will) there is nothing can set before you a door of Hope of ever carrying on this work without Courage: which work yet is of that nature, that it must be done, or all will be undone and ruin'd ; which consideration will suitably fall in here, to enforce and strengthen this first Reason of the Doctrine ; for if Reforming work were of an indifferent Nature, that might be done, or left undone, without any great detriment ; then our first Reason would be of no weight : but if we take in this, the unquestionable Necessity of it, it will hold its strength. Wherefore let it be considered in these two branches : Reforming work is necessary for the Honour of God, and for the publick Good.

It is Necessary,

1. For the *Honour of God*, and is that a light matter ? Surely to a Christian it should be dearer to him than his Life. Now *through the Breaking of the Law* (saith the Apostle) *God is dishonoured, and his Name blasphemed*, Rom. 2.

23, 24. And will you see, how this affected and afflicted the spirit of that Good man, *Psal.* 119. 53. 136. & 158 Verses: *Horror hath taken hold of me: Rivers of tears run down my eyes; because of the wicked that forsake thy Law: I beheld the transgressors, and was grieved; because they kept not thy Word.* And I appeal to you, what Christian is there that loves God, and believes his Word; but must be deeply affected with what *David* expresseth, not for Injuries done against himself, no, but Offences done against God. Surely a sadder thought never was found in the Heart of a true Christian; than to think that vile Worms of the Earth, should be suffered to blaspheme and defie the God of Heaven; men that have precious and immortal Souls, and are going to be judged at the Bar of God: Sure Christians should better endure Toads, Serpents, and Vipers; than that such Sinners should be let alone. How can a good man walk the streets with drie Eyes, that hears the prophane Swearer rending and tearing the Name of God? Oh intollerable! shall an Idolatrous *Micah* break out for his *Teraphim*, and say? *Ye have taken away my God which I have made, (a pitiful God indeed, that could first be made, and then stole;)* and what have I more? and what is this that ye say unto me, *What aileth thee?* and shall a Christian be silent, and not appear for the true God, whom we profess to honour, when his Law is violated? how can you reconcile it? Nay, how can I say, I love my Neigh-

Neighbour, if not greatly concerned ? alas ! to think what Multitudes are posting in the broad way to Hell, swearing, whoring, gaming, drinking, sinking, damning, and may be some offering Healths to the Devil ; what a Christian ? and no Concern, no Zeal for God, no bowels to poor perishing Souls ! But this leads to the second Branch, *viz.* That Reforming Work,

2. It's necessary for *the publick Good* ; for else what an inundation of Sin and Misery, would break in and ingulph us all. A Tully could say, ' Impunity is the greatest encouragement to Impiety : And *August.* ' Take away Justice, and what is a Kingdom but a Den of Thieves, and place of Plunderers ? And *Solomon* saith, *Because sentence against an evil Work is not speedily executed ; therefore the Hearts of the Sons of men, is fully set in them to do evil.* And the Prophet, *Jer. 6. 29.* *The Founder melts in vain, for the wicked are not plucked away ; Reprobate Silver shall men call them, because the Lord hath rejected them :* What was the Root of all this Wrath ? why, *The wicked are not plucked away.* q. d. Let men take what Course they will, to keep off wrath ; yet while the wicked remain unpunished, they lie open and exposed to Land-destroying Judgments. Upon this account Reforming Work in the punishing the Ungodly, is so far from being Cruelty, and want of Charity to your Neighbour ; as that not to do it would be highly so. Sin is that only Abominable thing, the Lord hateth ; and it is

the bitterest Evil the Land hath. *Hof. 4. 1, 2, 3. The Lord hath a Controversie with the Inhabitants of the Land, because there is no truth, &c. but by swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, and committing adultery, they break out; therefore doth the Land mourn.* O how many Kingdoms, and Churches have upon a flood of sin, been drown'd in misery? Go to *Shilo*, saith the Lord by his Prophet, *Jer. 7. 12. and see what I did to it, for their wickedness:* So may I say, Go to the *Asian Churches*, Go to *Jerusalem*, and see what have been the woful Effects of neglecting this work of Reformation: Alas! if these *Sheba's*, and *Jonah's*, be not cast out, a Land may look next to have its Inhabitants spued out by an angry God: it were the way to bring the guilt of Swearers, Sabbath-breakers, Whoremongers, &c. upon our own heads, and *Jerusalem's Wo*, upon *London*, to remove our *Candlestick*, and turn our *Goshen* into *Egypt*: for where Sin is let alone, there it, and Satan reigns; and will an holy God bear it? No, his Wrath will break out like Fire, and utterly consume us. If God depart from us, we are an undone People, and depart he will, if un-reform'd. O blessed Society of Reformers then, to provide that God may abide with us, and our Land be yet *Immanuel's Land*, by purging out and plucking away the wicked from among us. Thus from the Nature of the Work, as it is *publick, difficult, yet necessary*, Good Courage is required.

2 *Rea.* The second Reason is taken from the
Con-

consideration of the nature of the Instruments that are employed in this blessed Work of reformation: And it will Evidently appear in this respect; that good Courage is a necessary qualification, whether we consider the Instruments as Men, as Christians, or as Reformers.

1. As *Men*, and so the best have flesh, as well as Spirit; and flesh is frail and weak, apt and incident to wax weary and faint under its pressures: How oft was poor *David* ready to droop and faint! Hence he sighs out his fears and complaints! *Oh I shall one day fall by the hand of Saul: These Sons of Zerviah are too strong for me: I am become the Song of the Drunkard: Wo is me that I dwell in Mesech: Oh that I had the Wings of a Dove, that I might flee away, and be at rest!* and so you read of *Elijah* as quite weary of his Life, under a Juniper Tree, in the Wilderness, when he fled from *Jezabel*, and there requested of the Lord that he might have his Life taken away, 1 Kings 19. 4. And so you read of weeping *Jeremiah*, 9. 2. *Oh that I had in the Wilderness a Lodging-Place of way-faring men, that I might leave my People, and be gone from them; for they are an assembly of Treacherous Men.* Wherefore if we consider these Instruments, as men, subject to the like passions, and humane frailties with others; they stand in need of Good Courage in so great and painful a Work, as Reforming work is: but then if we consider them,

2. As *Christians*, The Argument riseth higher on our hand; that they must be of good Courage:

Courage: For at our Blessed Lord saith, *whoever will be my Disciple, he must deny himself; and take up his Cross, and follow me; or he cannot be my Disciple.* Mat. 16. 24. compared with *Mark* 8: 34. And (my Beloved) you know in our Baptismal Covenant, we consent, Engage, and bind ourselves on these very Terms, to renounce World, Flesh and Devil, to forsake all for Christ on his call, and to fight manfully under his Banner. So that good Courage, and constancy, is no other than good Conscience, and Fidelity, according to the Vows that we have made to the Lord in Baptism, and renewed at his Table. And finally if we consider them,

3. As *Reformers*, this will supperadd strength to inforce the Argument under Consideration, to be of good Courage in reforming Work: For as Reformers you are raised up, and called of God to this Work, and on this great design, and for this good end, have you offered yourselves willingly, united and joyned your hearts and hands to it: So that I may say to you, as *Shechaniah* in the former part of the Text to *Ezra*, this matter belongeth more especially to you: Be ye therefore of good Courage. It is on this very account, that the Command was so oft inculcated on *Joshua* and *Zerubbabel*, and others in Scripture that were called to Reforming Work, to be of good Courage, viz. because of their Office as they were Reformers. Courage being as necessary for a Reformer, as Wisdom for a Counciller, Eloquence for an Orator, Wings

to a Bird, and an Edge to a Razour. Surely you need the Zeal of a *Phinehas*, the Resolution of a *Joshua*, and the Heroick Courage of a *Nehemiah*, in this Work of Reformation! Methinks, Reformation, is like that Water of the Well of *Bethlehem*, which *David* longed for, and said, *Oh that some would give me to drink of it*: 2 Sam. 23. 15. But then whosoever would adventure for it, must break through the Host of the *Philistines*, ere they could come at it: And methinks Reformers are like those Three mighty men that brake through the Host of the *Philistines*, and took it and brought it to *David*, verse 16. Again methinks Reformers are like *Gideons* Three Hundred Men; that because they were Men of Spirit, and activity, the Lord would imploy them in that difficult Service, (*Judges* 7. 3. read with the 16th.) And disbands all the rest, that were faint, and fearful: for as much as fear disables a man of what otherwise he might do, it robs him of the strength he hath, and is indeed the bane of all Great, and good undertakings. So that you see the strength and force, of this Second Reason of the Doctrine. The 3d. is drawn,

3. *Rea.* From the Nature of the Objects of Reforming Work; or those persons that Reformers have to do, and deal with. These considered indeed, as men that have reasonable Natures, and precious and immortal Souls; one would think Reformation should be as Welcome to them as the rising Sun, that dispels darkness,

darkness, and diffuseth light, and heat, and healing to the World : But, alas, these persons, considered, as sinners, nay Servants to Sin, and Slaves to Satan ; they are such as hate the light of Reformation : See how the Scripture describes them, *2 Thes. 3. 2.* The Apostle saith, they are *Unreasonable Men* ; and the wise man saith, *Madness is in their Hearts, while they live,* *Eccl. 9. 3.* As Mad men rage against those, that come to cure them : They are *Sons of Belial*, that will endure no yoke but Satans. Scripture compares them to Swine, Wolves, Dogs ; surely then Reformers had need of a Breast-Plate of Adamant, and an Helmet of Steel to front, and make head against these brutish, unruly monsters ; though in the shape of men, that have *made their faces harder than a Rock,* *Jer. 5. 3.* To appear against and oppose this black guard of Hell, calls for an undaunted Courage. If you will pull down *Ahabs* house, and rout these uncircumcis'd *Philistines*, you must expect Lyons in your way, which nothing but a *Sampson-like* Courage, can get Victory over, and Honey out of them. Your Office is not only a thankless one, but attended and loaded with volleys of reproaches, censures, and calumnies and it may be curses too : for so it hath ever been : *Bona agere, & mala pati, Christianorum est.* Surveigh but how it was with our dear Redeemer ; though he came to seek, and to save that which was lost, and never hurt any : Yet in the days of his flesh, how was he hated, reproached ; all *Jerusalem* was troubled

troubled at his coming, as if some enemy had landed on their Coast; they said he was a *Samaritan* and had a Devil: Hence he expostulated with them, *for which of my good works do you stone me?* And my beloved, the Servant is not above his Lord: It will even be thus, while there is a busie Devil in the World, and that prejudicate deep-rooted Malice in the hearts of Sinners. There was *Moses* (you know) what a Blessed instrument of good, he was to that people of old in *Egypt*, and afterwards in the *VVildernefs*: Yet for all his Travels and Labours for their good; how ill did they requite him, *Num. 16. 41.* The Multitude let flie at *Moses*, as if he had been the Troubler of *Israel*. So *Caleb*, and *Joshua*, the people were ready to stone them, for endeavouring to reform and save them. It is so, those whose good you intend, in this Reforming work, will account you their Enemies: And therefore Good Courage is a needful qualification of Reformers: for you have a very hard task: You deal with Men, as *St. Paul* saith, *1 Cor. 15. 32. I fought with Beasts at Ephesus*, i. e. men made up of Inhumanity. And as *David* speaks, *2 Sam. 23. 6. The Sons of Belial are as Thorns*, they cannot be taken with Hands; but the Man that toucheth them, must be fenced with Iron, and the staff of a Spear, i. e. had need of an Heart, steel'd with Courage. *VVhen* the Lord shewed *Ezekiel* what hard and hot Service, he had like to have with those he was sent unto; pray Observe, how the Lord animates
and

and encourageth him, *Ezek. 2. 6. Thou Son of man, be not afraid of them, neither be afraid of their Words; though Bryars and Thorns be with thee, and thou dwellest among Scorpions, be not dismay'd at their Looks, they are a rebellious House.*

Moreover, you will find among the Objects of your Reforming VVork, some *Zanzummins, Nimrods*, Mighty ones, that think themselves Priviledg'd to sin, without controul, by their Outward Greatness: There are some great Swearers, Adulterers, Sabbath-breakers, whose Examples do a world of Mischief to the Publick; many taking in the infection from them: Now the higher the Person, always the viler the sin; and these you are more especially (so far as the Law extends) to prosecute, and to let them know, that our Laws are not like to Cobwebs, that take only little Flies and let great ones break through and escape; but chiefly to take these *Goliath's*, that the lower Class of delinquents may hear, and fear, and do no more so Wickedly: And how will you ever be able to deal with these gyant-like Sinners without Courage.

Besides, you will meet with some old Inveterate Rebels, that make a mock of Sin and Damnation; such as have *sold themselves to work Wickedness*; such as you read of *Psal. 1. 1. Are got in the seat of the scorner. And in Psal. 2. 1, 2, 3. That Râge, and take Councel together against the Lord, and you his Servants, saying, Let us break their Bands asunder, and cast their*
cords

cords away from us: And Oh the bitter eruptions of Gall, they vent against you Reformers, in their Wicked Cabals. *Sanballat*, and *Tobiah*, never more fretted, chafed against *Nehemiah*; *Herod* never more vexed, when he heard that Christ was born; than these Malignant, Old, accustomed Sinners do at you. Your Societies for Reformation are not only a Burthen, but a Torment to them: And besure these will turn a broad-side against you, who had rather be damned, than Reformed. Now then how necessary good Courage is to the prosecution of this work of Reformation, is evident from this Third Reason, the Nature of the Objects of it. And thus I have accounted for the second General head proposed, *viz.* To offer something by way of proof, and to lay down the Reasons of the Doctrine that which remains; is to make some practical improvement of the whole.

APPLICATION, And that Two ways.

1. This truth, will meet some, by way of *Reprehension*. And,

2. It will meet us all, by way of *Exhortation*.

First, By way of *Reprehension*.

1. It reproves such, as have no Spirit to appear for God, no spark of true Courage in their breasts for the publick good; but are Key Cold, all their care and concern is for their own private interest, this swallows up all, as *Pharaoh's* lean Kine did eat up the fat, how to advance their Trade? Here they have

Spirit

Spirit enough ; *Febru-like*, they drive furiously, as if they would break their Wheels in Pieces : But in this Great, this Good work of Reformation, they are *Ephraim-like*, *silly Doves without heart*. I would to God, such may sadly and seriously consider, *Mat. 12. 30. He that is not with me, is against me, and he that gathereth not with me, scattereth abroad* : These words were first spoken by our blessed Saviour, but are applicable to our Times ; he that is not with Christ in this work of Reformation, is against him.

2. It reproves others, that are so in Love with their own ease, soft and delicate persons, who, though they do not appear open Enemies to Reforming Work ; will yet be at no pains, run no hazards, to promote and help it forward ; but prefer their ease to the Honour of God, and the Publick good. I would these would sadly consider those startling Words, *Amos 6. 1. Wo to them that are at Ease in Zion*.

3. It reproves others, that are of a base Timorous, pusillanimous Spirit, frighted with their very shadows, dare not venture a scorn, a scoff for Christ ; though their own Consciences tell them, Reformation Work is the cause of God ; yet they are so afraid of the censure, and displeasure of Man, that they dare not appear ; Oh ! such a one will be offended, will put me out of his Will, or stick in my Skirts another day. I would such as these would sadly consider those two Scriptures, that are like the fingers of a mans hand on the Wall, setting

setting down their doom, *Mark* 8. 38. *Who-so-ever therefore shall be ashamed of me, and my Words, in this adulterous and sinful generation; Of him also, shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father, with the holy Angels. And that Rev. 21. 8. But the fearful, and the unbelieving, shall have their part in the Lake that burns with fire and brimstone; which is the second death.*

4. It reproves others, that are so in Love with the Mammon of this World; that they can never be brought to deny themselves, in foregoing any part of their Worldly Riches and Profits, for the Encouraging this blessed Work of Reformation: They will go along with you, provided it cost them nothing; but if once you come to ask any thing of them, they like that young Gentleman in the Gospel, (*Mar. 10. 22.*) must be excused, or they will go no further with you. I wish such would sadly consider our Saviours words in the following Verse, which amount to no less than Exclusion out of the Kingdom of Heaven: And St. Paul is very positive herein, *Phil. 3. 19. their end is destruction; and in that Black List, he brings in the Covetous, 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10. of whom he saith, Be not deceived, such shall not inherit the Kingdom of God.*

5. It reproves others, that are in such a deep Sleep, so stupid and unsensible; that Gallio-like, they care not a jot, whether the Ark or Dragon be set up; as being alike to them: not at all troubled to hear Gods holy and reverend

D

Name

Name blasphemed, or to see his holy Sabbaths profaned. I wish such would sadly consider, *Zeph. 1. 12.* where the Lord rings a dreadful Peal in the Ears of such as are settled on their lees; and in *Rev. 3. 16.* threatneth on this account to *spue them out of his Mouth.*

6. It reproves others, that instead of encouraging you, who are engaged in Reforming work, by concurring and joyning in with you; as truly they are ready to Censure you, for laying out your selves in it, as too busie with other Peoples business. What shall I say of these Monsters under the Christian Name? O that they had hearts to believe, that thundring Wo denounc'd by Christ against such, *Matth. 23. 13.* *Wo to you hypocrites, you shut the Kingdom of Heaven against men; for you neither go in your selves, neither suffer ye them that are entring to go in.*

7. I wish there were not Occasion to reprove another sort of Men among us, that did run well a while, they went out with you, but have not held out with you; that *Demas*-like have declin'd, and deceiv'd you; or like the leaves of the Trees at this time of the year, that fade and fall. Oh! that such would remember that terrible Text, in *1 Pet. 2. 21, 22.* compar'd with *Matth. 12. 45.* it had been better never to have put your hand to Gods Plough, than afterwards to look back: for the last State of that man is worse than the first.

8. And lastly, I could heartily wish, that there were no Occasion from hence to reprove another,

another, a Greater sort among us, viz. Remiss Justices, and Officers, to whom this Matter of Reformation belongs, as being their proper Province, and Sphere, wherein they are set by God, with an accented Charge to be a terrour to the Works and Workers of Iniquity ; and therefore called the *Ministers of God for Good*, Rom. 13. 4. else they bear the Sword in vain : Yet how fearful and deplorable a thing is it, that there should be found any among these (in the *place of Judgment* as the Wise man speaks, *Eccl. 3. 16.*) who when they should courageously draw out the Sword of Justice against the Wicked ; they (being not affected with Gods dishonour as they ought) suffer it to sleep, and lie rusting in the Scabbard : These are like your Stone Statues, representing some Military General, that stand in the same posture all the year, with their hands on the Hilt of their Swords, but never draw them forth. Oh that such would sadly consider that tremendous Scripture, 1 *Sam. 15. 22, 23.* Because *Saul* neglected the executing of Justice on the *Amalekites*, but spared them ; his Sin is called *Rebellion*, which is as the Sin of *Witchcraft*, and the Lord rejected him for ever.

Object. But have these Persons thus reprov-
ed, nothing to say ? Have they no Cloak,
no Pleas, to extenuate if not excuse their
faults ?

Ans. Yes, they have a Fardel, a pack of
pleas ; for Sinning and Shifting came into the
World together : but upon arraignment, and

tryal before the Bar of Scripture, they will all disappear. Give me leave a little to examine them.

1. We shall bring upon our selves (may some say) a deal of trouble, if we ingage in this Reforming Work. — *Ans.* What a deal of trouble did *Achan*, while unpunished, bring, upon the whole Camp of *Israel*, Josh. 7.

2. But we shall incurre a deal of Ill will from our Neighbours. — *Ans.* But you shall have the Good will of him that dwelt in the Bush, in the faithful discharge of this Work. *And when a mans ways please the Lord, he will make his Enemies to be at peace with him*, Prov. 16. 7.

3. But it is a tedious and difficult Work. — *Ans.* No wonder, when so many ill Humours have been so long a growing: Maladies shew their Malignity most, when Remedies are applied: And in that it is difficult, it is a sure Evidence that it's the Work of God: Look into Scripture, and see if ever Reformation Work, was carried on without difficulties: we must give parting Devils leave to tear and rend.

4. But it is to our Loss and dammage in our Time and Trades; such, and such, will never buy of me, if I inform, and proceed against them. — *Ans.* Suppose you should lose something for Christ, you shall never lose any thing by him. (Although by the way let that in *Hag.* 2. 19. be well considered, where the Lord promiseth, that from the very day that they entred
on

on this Work, he would bless them.) Besides, there is nothing you can lose, or lay down for Christ; but he hath lost and laid down ten thousand times more for you: and you can lose nothing, but what you had from God, and must shortly leave.

5. But the most are against it. — *Ans.* Bewail it; yet know, it was ever so; Christ's Flock, is but a little Flock; and Remember, there are none against it but the ungodly. Again, hath Reformation many Enemies? O then, let us be its Friends, let it have one the more on its side, for every one here before the Lord this Day.

6. But the Name of an *Informer* is odious, and scandalous; this among other virulent Invectives makes a frightful sound and noise. — *Ans.* Know, that although that Name hath been deservedly so, in late Reigns, wherein a company of Miscreants, Blinded and instigated by the Devil, edg'd on by an eager covetous desire after the Temporals of religious and sober Men; whose wickedness hath run them down with Satyrs to the dust, and rotted their Memory with their Bodies, under that Name of an *Informer*; Yet now that Name in this blessed Work of Reformation, is as justly honourable and precious, being for God and a common Good; as ever it was in former times odious and hatefull, when it was used against God and his Servants: Wherefore, let none of you (my Beloved) be hindred or deterred, by the clamour, and outcry of Malignants against this

this Name of an *Informers* ; as if you were on that account, a common Disturber of the quiet and peace of your Neighbours : but say, with *David*, *If this be to be vile, I will be more vile.* And were I providentially cast where I should hear any of those impious Ones (for I take it for granted, that they seldom or never appear in such Religious Assemblies as these) open their Black Mouths against this Name, saying, Oh we were all at peace, and quiet, before you came to inform against us : Truly my speech should be, Oh miserable peace ! you and Sin, you and Satan, at peace and quiet ; when the God of Heaven, saith, *There is no peace to the Wicked*, Isa. 57. ult. Nay, 1 Thes. 5. 3. *When they shall say, Peace, peace, behold sudden destruction cometh on them* : Oh Foolish and Unwise ; you would Swear, and Curse, and set your Mouths against Heaven, and break Gods Sabbaths, and you would have liberty so to do ; and if any whose Eyes are opened (through Grace) that they dare not run into the same Excess of riot with you, and make a Jest of Gods Wrath and the Flames of Hell, shall seek to stop you, and use Means to Reform you ; O they be Informers, Disturbers of our Peace, that we can't be so mad and merry as we would in our Way to Hell : En't this Sinners the ground of your Clamour ? you would be let alone, and have none to inform against you ; and so we should (by your good will) all of us go to Hell together ; you for Committing, and we for Conniving at your Wickedness :
The

The God of Heaven be mercifull to you, in opening your Eyes before it be too late.

The Second Branch of Improving this Truth, is by way of *Exhortation* unto all. Men and Brethren, I come this Day to speak to you, as *Shecaniah* spake to *Ezra*: *Arise, &c. Be of good Courage, and do it.* And I pray give me leave to use the liberty of Gods Ambassadour, in his behalf to Address my self to you all in general, and to you whom Providence hath singled out to this Work in particular. — And here, methinks, *Moses* his question is seasonable, *Exod. 32. 26. Who is on the Lords side?* And that in *1 Chron. 29. 5. Who is willing to offer themselves to the Lord,* in this blessed Work of Reformation? Surely there is none of this Congregation, but may do something: you to whom the Lord hath given Estates, it belongs to you, to put to your helping hand, to contribute willingly, and liberally towards this chargeable and excellent Undertaking. O spare no Cost, pinch not on the Lords side, wherefore hath he given you Estates, but that you should honour him with your Substance? and what an unspeakable Mercy would it be, if you can stand out, and say, God hath given me an Estate, and blessed be his Name, he hath given me an Heart also: Wherefore, be of good Courage, ye Noble Reformers, we will be with you to aid and assist you. — And so for the poorer sort, that with *Peter* must say, *Silver and Gold have we none; but in what-*

soever we are capable, we also will be with you; and so the Aged and the Weak, and all of you of what degree and rank soever you be, that love our Lord Jesus in Sincerity, may lay in a Stock of Prayers: And who can tell what Prayer may do, to set forward and promote the Work of Reformation? While *Moses* his hands were up, *Israel* prevailed. Wherefore I now solicit the improvement of all your gifts, parts, talents, interests and Capacities for this work this day, never more need than now.

And you (*Worthy Gentlemen*) in particular, who have engaged in the Work; we do acknowledge, we have great Cause to bless God for you; and I trust your Hearts do believe, how precious you are to all that Love and fear God in the Land: Your exemplary Zeal and Courage hath provoked many in this, and the Neighbouring Kingdom; and I hope God is breeding up among you, or from your Loyns, a Seed to serve him in their Generation, that shall not only shake but vanquish the Devils Kingdom. Wherefore, let me exhort you, to advance yet more and more in your Zeal and Courage, for the carrying on this Work you have so happily begun, and set in with. Go on (*Brave Minds*) and Act as men bottom'd on the Rock of Ages: I confess there are *Mountains* of Opposition in your way; but God Almighty can make them to *become a Plain*: Onwards therefore ye Noble Reformers, Informers, every one in his Station, and I shall give you what assistance I can, in reach-

reaching out to you, and leaving with you some few encouraging and quickning Motives to excite you, and Rules to direct you in your work; and so commit the whole to the Blessing of God.

1 *Mot.* Consider for your encouragement in this work of reformation, who it is that you have with you in it, and on your side. First you have God with you; and he is invincible, *Rom. 8. 31. What shall we say then to these things? if God be for us, who can be against us?* and *Josh. 1. 7.* he will be with you in all the weary steps you have yet to take, to be your defence, to give in supplies of strength, as your day shall be. 2 *Chron. 15. 2.* You have for your encouragement the Lords gracious engagement in his Word of Promise, backt with his arm of Power. What a munition of rocks and sure place of defence was he to *Moses, Joshua, Zerubabel, Ezra, Nehemiah*, and that cloud of witnesses that have gone before you in this blessed work? Therefore let your courage grow great, for you have a God of great Power with you. See what courage and confidence this kindled in Good *Hezekiah*, 2 *Chro. 32. Be strong, and courageous; be not afraid nor dismayed for all the multitude that is with the King of Assyria: yet there is more with us, than with him; with him is an arm of flesh, but with us is the Lord our God to help us.* What's an arm of flesh to the Lord of Hosts? but as chaff before the whirlwind. O for Wisdom to improve this aright, and you may make light of all the darings of the Devil,

Devil, and his instruments in the world. You but keep in with God, no matter who falls out with you: if you appear and stand up for him against the ungodly, he will appear and stand up for you to protect you against all dangers whatever: use what prudence you can to prevent danger, but comfortably remember, *The Name of the Lord is a strong Tower.* There is a notable Story *Luther* tells, of a Bishop of *Magdenburgh*: The Duke of *Saxony* prepares War against him: The good Bishop falls to Reforming his Church and Praying; One of the Dukes Spies observing the Bishop to make no preparation for War, ask'd him if he did not hear what his Master was doing against him; he piously answered, *Ego curabo Ecclesiam, & Deus pro me pugnabit.* "I'll take care of my Church, and God will fight for me. When the Duke came to hear it, he disbands his Army, confessing he was too weak to war against him, that had engaged God on his side.

Moreover, you have for your Encouragement the Ministry of the Good Angels on your side, to guard and defend you, *Heb. 1. 14. & Psal. 34. 7.* You read in *2 King. 6. 14.* of *Solomon's* Life-guard every Day, three hundred Men with Shields, and two hundred with Targets; but one Angel is a stronger Guard than all of them: Now you have an Host of them to attend you continually; therefore be of Good Courage, &c.

Moreover, you have the *King*, and *Parliament*

ment with you, and on your side in this work : Our *Ezra* finding favour in the Eyes of the King, was greatly encouraged thereby, and solemnly Blesseth the Lord that put it into the Kings heart, *Chap. 7. 27.* Well, the Lord hath wonderfully raised up and set over us an excellent King, that hath shew'd himself zealous for Reforming work, sending forth his Royal Proclamation for the more effectual promoting of it : This (my Beloved) is like the great Wheel in the Watch, it carrieth a mighty force with it to go on with the Work ; when you are assured of so great a Potentates hearty Concurrence with you in it.

Besides, you have all the Godly in City and Countrey on your side : You have a large room in the hearts of thousands in the Kingdom, that are pouring out Prayers for your success, and for Gods special presence with, and blessing on you, and your Families ; and therefore be of Good Courage.

2. Consider how Honourable it is to be Employ'd in a Work, that tends so much to advance the Honour of God and the Nations Good : To be found contesting against the Corruptions of the Age and place you live in, to swim against the Stream of Ungodliness : See the dignity of it, in that *1 Sam. 2. 30.* *They who honour me (saith the Lord) I will honour.* And in *Prov. 14. 34.* *Righteousness exalts a Nation ; but Sin is a reproach to any People.* How did God honour the Names of *Moses, Caleb, and Joshua,* who kept a Countermotion to the wickedness of
of

of their Times ! And that good Work wrought by that sincere, affectionate Woman, in *Matth.* 26. from the 8th. to the 14th. Verses. *Verily, wheresoever this Gospel shall be preached in the whole World, there shall also this, that this Woman hath done, be told for a Memorial of her : And this Honour shall all (Godly Reformers) have that have faithfully espoused Gods quarrel against Sin and Satan, They shall be mine (saith the Lord) in the day when I make up my Jewels : He hath his Book of Remembrance, wherein is recorded all they have done out of Love to his Name, Mal. 3. 16, 17. And they shall be had in everlasting Remembrance. Rev. 2. 2. I know thy Works, thy Labours and thy patience, how thou couldst not bear them that are evil, and 13 Verse, I know how thou hast held fast my Name, and hast not denied it. O the Honourable mention the Lord makes of such ; for he is not unrighteous to forget their Labour of Love, wherefore your Work shall be rewarded, 2 Chron. 15. 17. Be of good Courage.*

3. Consider how useful and beneficial it is to be employed in this Work. Reformers are publick Blessings to a Land : If you look into *Num. 25. 11.* You may see what the Lord said of Phinehas, *he hath pacified my wrath (while he was Zealous for my name sake among them) that I Consumed not the Children of Israel in my jealousy.* There were many Hundred Thousands of People, seem'd to be condemn'd to ruin and destruction ; and Twenty Four Thousand of them were executed in one day, and the rest going
after

after them : Well, pray Observe, how one *Phinehas* by that excellent piece of Service he did for God, saved all the rest. So you read how one *Moses* kept off wrath from many, *Psal.* 106. 23. So *Job.* 22. 30. *The Innocent saves an Island* : And *Jer.* 5. 1. *Go through the City, and see if you can find a man, if there be any that Executeth Judgment ; and I will Pardon it.* So in *Ezek.* 22. 30. *And I sought for a Man among them, that should make up the Breach, and stand in the gap before the Land, that I should not Destroy it.* Sometimes when heavy Judgments have been inflicted on a Land, one zealous Reformer of Good Courage in Executing Justice, hath removed them : So that the Publick safety is imbarqued in this Work of Reformation. I mention this to encourage you (Good hearts) to go on, and be strong ; that those delinquents, on whom God would have justice done, may be proceeded against ; for all that is dear to us, is wrapt up in Gods favour and presence ; and nothing can be a surer pledg of it, than Reforming Work. O what a Token of Mercy would this be to the present and succeeding Generation ? *Isa.* 65. 8. *As new Wine is found in the Cluster, and one saith destroy it not, for a Blessing is in it : So will I do for my Servants sake, that I may not destroy them all.* And for posterity, you (Noble and Blessed Instruments in this Work) will Transmit a Blessing, far surmounting Riches, Houses, Lands, &c. You leave them a God in Covenant to be their God, and a name better than that of Sons and Daughters :

ters: and how happy they will be in having the Lord for their God, you may see, in *Psalm 144. 15. They will rise up and call you Blessed, and this City shall be called a Mountain of Holiness, and an Habitation of Justice.* O what a propitious Province hath the Mercy of God, and the good Affection of our Wise and excellent King set you in! now to shew your Love and zeal to your Countrey, and posterity after you? *England* will be *England*, and Souls will be precious, when our Heads are laid in the Dust. O think with your selves, that you heard King, and Kingdom, Children and Posterity, saying to you, as *Shechaniah* to *Ezra*, *Be of Good Courage, and do it.* And as it will be thus Beneficial to the publick; a Greater Security to the Land, than if *Englands* Walls were Brasse, and her inhabitants *Anakims*: So will it redound to your own unspeakable benefit and Comfort, when you come to lie on a Bed of Death; as you may see in *Isai. 38. 3. Remember Lord how I have walked before thee with an upright Heart*; and *Acts 13. 36. For David after he had Served his own Generation, by the Will of God, he fell asleep.*

4. Consider for your further Encouragement and engagement, what hath been done already; and what is yet remaining to be done. My Beloved, it were a rich and encouraging mercy if this blessed Work of Reformation were but now in *Embryo*; but (blessed be our Gracious God) it is Shap'd and Born, and hath got Cloaths upon it. To see but one
Stone

Stone laid in this building, were enough to Exhilerate and invigorate a Pious Soul ; but what Courage then should it put into us, to see it carried on, and prosper under the Divine Blessing, from Year to Year. This was the Apostles Argument 2 Cor. 4. 1. *Having received Mercy we faint not :* And this is mine to you this day ; You know in your own Souls, God hath not turn'd away his Mercy from you, he hath Covered you under the Wing of his Watchful Providence, that not a Limb of you has been Broken ; you may set up your *Ebenezer*, Your *Stone of Help*, 1 Sam. 7. 12. and say, *Hitherto the Lord hath Helped us.* You may say, as in Genes. 49. 23, 14. *The Archers have Hated and Shot at us ; but our Bow abides in Strength, through the Mighty Hands of the God of Jacob.* In the Midst of all your Dangers, how Wonderfully have you been Preserved in Life and Love, in Safety and Unity Together to this Day ? The Good which hath been done by you hath not been Small ; The Care of Heaven over you hath been Exceeding Great. You have Sprung a Mine under Satans Kingdom ; how many Dens of Thieves, Cages of unclean Birds, Nests of Serpents, have you Discovered and Routed ? They have Hissed but not hurt you. How many Thousands have you brought to Justice, by a Vigorous Execution of our Good Laws ? Though you cannot Change their Natures, and bring them to Faith, yet Blessed be God you have

restrained many of their vile practices, and brought them to fear. Though they are not so good as you would have them be ; yet it's a Mercy that they cannot be so Wicked as they would be. You have given a great Check, and stop to the Diffusion and dissemination of those open Blasphemies and Immoralities that once most impudently Rode in State in the Streets of this our Metropolis: So that now if (as I may allude to *Isai. 14. 32.*) any stranger should come into *England*, and enquire, what News ? You (Noble Reformers) have furnished us with an Answer, *Viz. God is with us, for the Wicked are pluckt away* : Time once was that one could not pass the streets, without hearing the Name of God profaned; and seeing the day of God polluted ; but now the Lord hath set up a Standard, *Viz. Societies for Reformation*, to stop the Mouth of iniquity ; and many of those that formerly declared their Sin as *Sodom*, now are seeking Corners, and Coverts to hide it. Wherefore lay up Experience, and Learn Confidence. O be of Good Courage, and Trust a Tryed God, and live those Two Great Scriptures *Psal. 63. 7.* and *2 Cor. 1. 9, 10.*

Moreover, Consider what is yet to be done ; your Work, and your Warfare is not yet accomplished, your difficulties and dangers are not yet over ; there is a deal of Rubbish yet to be removed. Methinks, the work of Reformation, is like *Elijah's Cloud*, first as a
Man's

Man's hand, or like *Ezekiel's Waters*, first to the Ankles; and my hearty wish is, it may prove like to these in the Issue, to cover the whole face of the Heavens, and to rise 'till it become a great River. But this is not the Work of one day, it's well if it be perfected in one Age. Therefore let me bespeak you, to double your Courage and Resolution in this Work, as the Angel of the Lord did the Prophet *Elijah*: To double his Meal, *1 King. 19. 6, 7.* And the Angel of the Lord, came again the second time, and said, *Arise, and eat, because the journey is too great for thee to go upon once eating.* My Beloved, you had need to reinforce your Strength and Courage; for you have yet before you, the heat and burthen of the day. I mention this, that (as Oyl to the Flame) it may stirr up your Zeal for God, and make you to wax stronger. There is nothing sets off true Courage in its Lustre and Glory, like Sharp Tryals: *Joshua* had never appear'd such a stout Champion for God, if he had not met with stout Opposers; nor *David*, if he had not had a *Goliath* in his way. *Jam. 1. 12.* *Blessed is the man, who when he is tryed, endureth temptation, he shall receive a Crown of Righteousness:* Wherefore gird on your Armour, for your Battel is not over; it's just matter of Praise that so much is done already; but is there not yet a generation of Vipers roosting in your City? O *London, London*, are there no Swearers yet in thy Streets? Are there no Drunkards yet in thy Taverns and Tap-houses?

ses? Are there no Whoredoms yet in thy Chambers? Happy were it for thee, if there were not: Thou hast Scavengers to cleanse thy Streets, but is there not more filth within than is cast out? But I must contract in what remains.

5. Consider the mischievous Evils of a cowardly fearful Spirit in the Work of Reformation. The Wise man telleth you, *Prov. 29. 25.* That *the fear of man bringeth a snare*, i. e. a Slavish Fear; for there is a Fear of Man that is a Duty, viz. a Fear of provoking our Superiours, and a fear of wronging our Neighbours, and a fear of giving any Offence; but a Slavish fear is a sinful Fear: When a man will decline the Way and Work of God, for fear of displeasing a sinful Man, and losing his Favour. Oh the Snares and Mischiefs this brings a Man into! it darkens his Mind, *Psal. 53. 5.* Men in a fright they know not what they do, they have no use of their directive faculty. Again, it deadens the Conscience, it bribes or breaks it. O how do some mangle their Consciences by sinful compliances through slavish fear! Again, it drives the Will into sin, makes men do what they never intended, *Matth. 26. 35.* *Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee*; and yet he did deny Christ through slavish Fear, *ver. 70.* Again, it drives the Man at last into despair, as *Spir. a.* Indeed it would be endless to recite all the mischievous effects of a slavish Fear: To tell you how it distrusts God, neglects Duty, distracts the Heart,

Reformation of Manners. §1

Heart, tosseth the Mind, as a Ship that hath no Anchor, how it keeps the Soul in bondage, robs God of the Glory of his Power, Goodness, Faithfulness, makes a man hide his Profession, furl his Sails, sneak away from the Work of his Day and Place, and finally how it wrongs the Publick, and exposeth the Person to Hell, *Rev. 21. 8.* Only give me leave to tell you, that if there should be any found among you, that through Cowardise or Corruption (especially such as are in Office, and have Power in their hands) should shrink and be partial in the Execution of Justice; your Omission is culpable, and you contract the guilt of those you should, but do not restrain, and lay your selves and your Families open to Gods most heavy Judgments: See for this that emphatical Scripture, *1 Sam. 3. 13. I'll judge his House for ever, for the iniquity he Knows: because his Sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not.* O the sad Effects then of a faint, of a false Spirit in the neglect of Reforming Work: Sin will grow bold, God angry, and we guilty. In the last place,

6. Consider, to quicken you to Zeal and Courage in the Work before you this Day, how daringly bold the Wicked are in the Work of the Devil, and in working out their own Damnation. The Scripture speaks of their *working Wickedness with both hands earnestly*; and in *Isai. 41. 6, 7.* it's said, *they helped every one his Neighbour, every one said to his Brother, Be of Good Courage.* What (my Beloved) shall

these say so? to provoke one another in the pursuit of their Lusts, to be Red-hot, Hell-hot, in the way to Damnation, in which way they have the Great God, Angels, and Good men against them; and shall not we much more provoke one another, in the pursuit of the work of Reformation? wherein we have both the King of Heaven, and the Host of Angels, and the King of *England* and all the Godly with us, for us: what shall Sinners be bold, and any of us be cold? (God forbid!) shall they run hazards, spare no Cost, be prodigal of their Lives, venture all, to gratifie their Lusts, to dishonour God, and damn their Souls, and ruine all they can? and shall not we shew as much Zeal and Spirit to save and preserve all we can? But I shall add no more by way of Motive. Give me leave to lay down a few Rules to direct you to be couragious in Reforming Work, and so commit the whole to the Blessing of God.

1. Above all see that you be good your selves. *Ezra* our Reformer here in the Text was so: he was really a Godly man. Are you so? I am now pleading Gods Cause (though a poor unworthy man,) I stand between God and you, and therefore ask it again, Are you holy? Is there a thorough work of Grace wrought in your Hearts? Oyl in your Vessels? Are you Vessels cleans'd, purged, and so fitted for the Lords use, such in which an holy God can take pleasure? God forbid, any of you, who shew your selves forward in Reforming others, should be found unrenewed your selves.

God

God knows my heart, I cannot but earnestly desire that you should be saved, who are employed in the work of saving others. Wherefore, above all let your care run out about your own Souls; as Knowing, *without Holiness, no man shall see the Lord*, Heb. 12. 14. O therefore be not content with Shews of Religion. Paul while he was a *Pharisee*, was exceeding zealous in his Way, and blameless in his Walk, and yet Christless. It would be too tedious a work here to shew you, how far a Man may go, and what adventures he may make, in publick Work, upon other Motives, than from Grace. Alas, untill a man hath inward Experience of the Power of Godliness in his own Soul; how can it ever be expected that he should be hearty, and throughout for God, in an hour of Temptation? O then see that you come not only under the Name of *Reformers*; but under the Power, and Spirit, and Life of *Godliness*. When the Kingdom of Christ is set up in a Mans own Heart, then is he a qualified Instrument to set it up in the World. Your Work is Good, O be you good also: Else you will be but like Noah's Shipwrights, that helped to build an Ark to save others, while themselves perished. Remember what I told you in the opening the Doctrine, viz. That *Regeneration* is the Root of true *Courage* and *Resolution* in the Work of Reformation. He that stands up for God, and is not a Godly man, he may appear a while, but when a fiery Tryal comes, he will fall off, *Mark*. 13. 20, 21.

what was never rooted in the Heart, will sooner or later fail, and come to nothing. Oh that it may then be said of You, what was said of *David*, *A man after Gods own Heart*; and *Joshua*, *I, and my house, will serve the Lord*: This will raise your Spirits above the Frowns and Flatteries of a lying World; when you have a well-grounded Evidence of your saving Interest in Christ, and that God is your God and reconciled Father in him, it will make you daring men, to do great things for your God. Would you be Courageous?

2. Beware of a Narrow selfish Spirit: learn to set light by Self: let there be no Sons of *Zebedee* among you, seeking great things for themselves. Away with all Private designs in Publick work. He that travels with Self, will bring forth Shame in the Issue: but when Gods Honour and the Publick Good is that you carry in your Breast, then God and you meet, and carry on the same Design, and you have God to back, and aid you, when you find the Work too hard. O let there be no mercenary Motions. *Meum, & Tuum*, are the worst Byass that can be in Reforming Work: when Reformation is but as *Twelve*, and Self as *Thirteen*, it spoils all. There is no trusting a selfish Spirit, that is not thoroughly devoted to God; Self will be won by a soft Temptation, and when difficulties arise it will soften, and effeminate the Man, that he will certainly deceive you. *Boaz*, when he pressed the King of *Navarre*, to appear boldly for the Cause

cause of God in the Reformation; the King answered, that indeed he was a Friend to the Reformed Religion, but was resolv'd to launch out no further to Sea in it, than he might (if a Storm arose) get safe a-shore: But otherwise minded, was brave *Luther*, when offered a Cardinals place, if he would sit still, and be quiet; replied No, not if he might be Pope. Again would you be of Good Coutage in Re-forming Work; then give up your selves to

3. Study God more, and the Creature less, in order to a fixed trust in God, and independency on the Creature; and so Courage will come in again. See *Isa.* 26. 3, 4. and *Chap.* 40. 17, 28; and *Chap.* 41. 10, 13, 14. You can never trust the Creature too little, or God too much. Who was more Couragious than *David*? Well, whence was it? see *Psal.* 18. 1, 2, 29, 32 *Ver.* The more sensible we are of our own and the Creatures insufficiency, the more shall we go out of our selves, and have no confidence in the Flesh; but as the Apostle saith, *2 Cor.* 1. 9. *Trust in him who raiseth from the dead.* *Jer.* 17. 5, 6, 7. Whoever undertaketh publick Work in his own strength, will soon find his Courage cool. But *Who so trusteth in the Lord, shall be as mount Zion that cannot be removed.* Hence it is you read *Psal.* 16. 8. *I have set the Lord always before me: Because he is at my right Hand I shall not be moved.* This kept him strait in a crooked Age; and this steeld *Job*, my record is on high (saith he) under a load of reproach: And so it will you, so as you shall not

remit a dram of Courage, for all the Censures you lie open to. Keep but God in your Eye, and this will be armour of proof to baffle and conquer an Army of Temptations: For what cant the God of Heaven effect for his Friends on Earth? His Arm is not shortned, he can appoint *Salvation for Walls*, He can put Life into dead means. The *Sword of the Lord and Gideon* can do wonders. *Luther* an obscure Friar made the whole Kingdom of Antichrist shake. God can make the Earth to *help the Woman*, cast down the Walls of *Jericho* by the sound of Rams Horns, out of weakness make strong; nothing is too hard for a God to do: And did he ever yet fail his Servants? O let his All-sufficiency be your Foundation to build on; it's an impregnable Rock, all Waves will but dash themselves into foam and froth. Out of God there is nothing but the Creature, and that is vain.

4 Be Sincere and impartial in all you do. Remember all your Hearts are naked and open to Gods all-seeing Eye. While you have your Eyes abroad observing others, O forget not that you have a domestick cheat in your own Bosoms. *Jer. 17. 9.* And therefore Watch that, as *Solomon* saith, *Above all keepings keep thy Heart.* To bleed inwardly, is more dangerous than at the Nose: Outward acts of Sin are criminal in the Courts of Men; and Secret at the Tribunal of God. This will be an Evidence of your sincerity, and will distinguish you from the closest Hypocrites, to have your
Eye

Eye much at home, on your own Hearts ; and a sence of your Sincerity will be a mighty help to Courage. *He that walketh uprightly, walketh surely,* and therefore may go on Couragiously, He is most safe that is most sincere. The honest Man is on the surest Ground and Side, and therefore may wax bold as a Lion. Nothing spirits a Man more than Fidelity to God and Conscience. O what Life and Courage is there (methinks) in those Words ? *Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile,* 2 Tim. 1. 7. The spirit of fear and Cowardise, is opposed to the Spirit of a sound Mind, i. e. a spirit purg'd from guilt. O what dejecting fears did the guilt of Sin cast Joseph's Brethren in ? Gen. 42. 21, 22. Who wou'd take a Man half dead with fear into the Field to Fight ? The Lord help you to mind what that good Man said to his Judges, in 2 Chron. 19. 6. *Take heed what you do, for you judge not for Man but for the Lord, who is with you in the Judgment. Wherefore now let the fear of the Lord be upon you, take heed and do it: For there is no iniquity with the Lord your God, nor respect of Persons, nor taking Bribes.* I gladly hope there is none of you guilty on this account ; but if there should, O go to Christ and labour by faith in his Blood to get off the stain of guilt, and to fetch in power from him to cut off that right Hand Sin. Again,

5. Labour to get your Heart Inflamed with Love to Christ, and to one another, 2 Cor. 5.
14. The love of Christ constraineth, and Cant. 8.
6. Love

6. *Love is as strong as Death.* The whole World vail'd over with the most glittering Temptations, to draw off Love from its Object, would be despis'd; no dissuatives of Friends, no Policies of Enemies can stop or turn it aside. Love casts out fear, no waters can quench it. You see in the weak Creature the force of natural affection; a Hen will fly in the face of a Dog in defence of her Brood. What a courage then will the Love of Christ enkindle in you? It is like fire in a man's Bosom, it will appear, it brings a Man under its Dominion, it will make hard things easie. And nothing like Love, lay what Bonds you will upon a man, he will break them all, Vows, Promises, Resolutions, Covenants, upon the Return of Temptation suited to mans Predominant Corruption: But now when once the Heart is bound by the Cords of Love to Christ, it is invincible. Though life be so dear to a man, that he would give Skin for Skin, to save it; yet Christ is more precious, and dear than Life it self, to a Soul inflam'd with Love to him. And no Wonder, when you consider at what a rate he hath shewn his Love to us, when in our Blood and Enmity, he died for us, to ransom Rebels, or else we had all Eternally perished: So that in point of Ingenuity, and Gratitude, the True Believer will say, O my dear Saviour, that camest from Heaven to Earth out of Love to poor Sinners, and didst undergo the Accursed death of the Cross to Redeem me; thou art Worthy of all my Love,
Life,

Life, Labours. Get then this Love of Christ once fixed in your Hearts, and it will be impossible to resist the force of it, it will fix you for God, in the Work before you, against all opposition. But then there is another branch in this Direction, *viz.* To get your Hearts knit to one another by Love. I suppose you know the story of *Sylurus* the *Scythian* King, of his Eighty Arrows bound up together, and given to his Eighty Sons: Representing thereby the strength of Unity; that while they Lived in Oneness of Affection together, no power would be able to break them. But if they seperated, how soon might a single Arrow be broken? So would I recommend it to you. Would you be of Good Courage? see that you maintain Love and Unity yet more and more.

It was the dying charge of our dearest Lord, *To Love one another.* And it was the Honourable Badge of the Primitive Christians, *viz.* See how they Love one another. And it is the Great Characteristick of a Sincere Christian, *1 John 3. 14.* And we know that we have passed from Death to Life, because we Love the Brethren. And it is the lustre and Glory of our Profession, *Psal. 133. 1.* And it's the Nurse and Nourisher of Magnanimity and Courage, it will make you undaunted in your Work, and strong to endure assaults; like a Ship compacted of many boards, that can endure stress of Weather, beating of Waves, violent Storms; which, if divided, would soon become a Wreck. O what a Ravishing

vishing Argument is that! In *Phil. 1. 1, 2.* If
 there be any Consolation in Christ, &c. — Let
 nothing be done through Strife, but in Love and
 Lowliness of mind, esteeming others better than them-
 selves. How Foolish is it for Brethren to fall
 out by the Way? If Passengers in a Boat quar-
 rel, they endanger the sinking one another.
 Blessed be God for that healing, closing Spi-
 rit that hath appeared among you (though of
 different Opinions in lesser things in Religion)
 in this Reforming Work. The Good Lord
 turn the Hearts of the Fathers to the Children,
 and Children to their Fathers throughout the
 Kingdom; and banish all bitterness and Old
 Prejudices from among us, and revive that an-
 cient Spirit of Brotherly Love, *Acts 4. 32, 33.*
The multitude of Believers were of one Heart, and
one Soul; and great was the power and Spirit,
 that Accompanied that Spirit of Love. And
 in that *1 Cor. 1. 2.* The Apostle writing to the
 Church, wisheth Grace to all that are called to be
 Saints; he adds withal, that in every place call
 upon the Name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs,
 and ours. And in *Chap. 13. 1.* faith, Though I had
 the Tongue of Angels, &c. and had not Love, I
 am nothing. I know there are two Seeds will
 never accord, that of the Woman and that of
 the Serpent: *Israelites, and Egyptians: Prote-*
stants and Papists: But for Brethren, that if they
 differ in one point, and that Circumstantial, yet
 agree in Forty (as an excellent Writer hath it)
 and these Essentials; I say for such to make a
 Great stir, about a Tile of the House, as if it
 were

were a Foundation Stone; O what folly is it! *Hast thou Faith? Have it to thy self.* What though there be among Good men, variety of Opinions, or different Apprehensions? Why may there not be Oneness of Heart and affection? Since they have all One God and Father, One Lord and Saviour, One Faith, One Baptism. Wherefore *Let us Consider one another, to provoke unto Love and Good Works,* Heb. 10. 24. As you bear the Name *Christian*, Love all (*eo nomine*) that bear Christs Image. Certainly our Safety lieth in Love and Unity. Let us give the Right hand of Fellowship to those, with whom we hope to enjoy fellowship at Christs right hand hereafter. In a word, this Spirit of mutual Love among you, will animate you with a Spirit of Power and Courage, as the Apostle unites them together in that *2 Tim.* 1. 7. Again in the last place, Would you be of Good Courage? then,

6. While your hand is on Gods Plough in *Reforming Work*; let your Eyes and Hearts be up to the God of Heaven, in *Fervent Prayer* and Supplication for his Blessing upon it: *The fervent Effectual Prayer of a Righteous man availeth much,* Jam. 5. 16. The Prayer of Faith hath done Wonders, wrought through Mountains of Difficulties. *Jacob* pray'd, and obtain'd a blessing; *Amos* pray'd, and removed a Curse; *Jonah* pray'd when a double Death threatned him, and that prayer open'd the door of the *Leviathan*. Whenever you meet with difficulties in your Work, do as Good *Jehosaphat* did, Lord

we know not what to do, but our eyes are up unto thee. And Remember for your encouragement, that God never ceased granting till *Abraham* ceased asking. O all you that make mention of the Lord, you that have any Credit in the Court of Heaven, every Soul of you, pray, pray; O give the Lord no rest, but say, *For Zion's sake I will not hold my peace; If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth,* &c. *Psal. 137. 5, 6.* Break in upon Gods retirements, thrust your Petitions into his Bosom, through the Hand of our Great and Glorified Advocate; urge the Lord with his Promises; you may plead them, your God allows it; God hath saved in Six, yea Seven troubles, and shall we not pray? O trust the Lord with the performance of his Word, he will be seen in the Mount; only abide with wrestling *Jacob*, and let him not go, till you get the Blessing: Perseverance crowns all. Remember that Parable of our blessed Saviour, to teach men *always to pray, and not faint,* Luke 18. 1. A strong continued gale of Prayers, will make Satan come down like Lightning: And altho' we are an unworthy Nation, and our Sins cry aloud for Judgments; yet cast not away your Hopes, Free Grace can find Arguments to help at the lowest Ebb, when deserved Wrath might make us flame; and we may grow confident of that Help, if we but grow fervent in Prayer.

To conclude, I beseech you, let these Six
Rules

Rules be continually with you, let them *awake* with you in the *Morning*, and *walk*, and *talk* with you in the *day*, and *lie down* with you in the *Evening*, Prov. 6. 21, 22.

1. See that you be *Good your selves*, in a State of Peace with God, New Creatures in Christ: else how sad will it be with your Souls in the day of God? Your selves will be *Cast-aways*, all Spiritual Arguments to a carnal man, will be but as warm Cloaths to a dead Corps.

2. Guard against a *narrow selfish Spirit*: else it will prove fatal, you will not only lose your Courage, but your Crown. Let all then turn on the Axle-Tree, that hath these two Poles, *Gods Glory*, and the *Publick Good*. 1 Cor. 10, 31.

3. Study *God more*, and the *Creature less*: else you will be in danger of unworthy thoughts of the blessed God, as if he would prove false to you in an hour of Difficulty.

4. Study *Sincerity*, God will be true to you, be you true to him. 2 Chron. 15. 2. He that is for God in Sincerity, shall have God with him, for him, in abundant Mercy.

5. Let the *Love of Christ*, and *Christians as Christians*, reign in your Hearts, and Zeal and Courage will flame out in your Lives, for the advancement

vancement of his Interest, whose Love brought him from Heaven to Earth, and made him break through Death and Hell to Redeem you: And as Christians move all in One Body, as animated by One Spirit of Love, and you will be invincible, invulnerable.

6. *Pray without fainting, without ceasing.* What remains but my hearty Wish for you? *viz.* May it please the God of Heaven evermore to be with you, to give you the Spirit of Wisdom to discern, and of Courage to discharge his Will, in this Great and Good Work of Reformation you have Engaged in; and afterwards give you a Crown of Glory.
Amen.

FINIS.
